

## **Criteria To Be Used to Identify Reasonable Alternative Terminal Locations**

Eight key criteria are proposed for use in the preliminary evaluations to identify those locations which would offer a reasonable alternative for developing facilities that would meet the need for and purpose of the Proposed Project. These criteria are described below. In guidance issued in the *Federal Register* (Vol. 46, No. 55, March 23, 1981), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) has defined “reasonable alternatives” as including “those that are *practical or feasible* from the technical and economic standpoint and using common sense,...”, (emphasis added).

### **Navigation Access**

A key consideration for each site to be evaluated will be its proximity to an existing deepwater navigation channel, preferably a channel already at, or approved for, a project depth which would meet the needs of modern container vessels. Other issues addressed in regard to each site will include:

- Does the site location contribute to navigation safety?
- If developed, would the site provide reasonable navigation access in terms of ship steaming times, constraints on ship movements, and ship movement costs?

Based on widely-applied port industry planning criteria, a minimal container facility would provide two berths for the anticipated fleet of container vessels. Modern container vessels require a berth length of 1,000 feet. Thus, one criterion for this portion of the evaluation will be: does the site provide sufficient frontage for development of a minimum of two thousand feet of berth?

### **Dredging Requirements**

An evaluation criteria closely linked to that of navigation access will be the requirement for dredging associated with the development of a marine cargo terminal at each site considered. This evaluation will address the relative construction dredging requirements for each site, and the likely maintenance dredging requirements for the site. The evaluation will also address the issue of available disposal sites for material dredged to develop and maintain each site.

### **Available Backland**

The available backland for development of container processing facilities and support infrastructure will be evaluated for each site. The port industry standard and the PHA need call for 100 acres of backland to support each new terminal berth. Thus, a minimum of 200 acres of available backland will be used as the criterion for this portion of the evaluation. In addition, each site will be evaluated for the availability of a compact land mass compatible with efficient terminal operations. The preferred terminal configuration would provide substantial areas for container operations directly adjacent to each berth.

## **Land Development Constraints**

This criterion will address requirements for demolition of existing facilities and clean-up of hazardous materials which would be required for development at each site considered. This criterion also will address the need for soil improvements required at each site, and the relative potential costs for site preparation at each site.

## **Road Access**

This criterion will consider the potential availability of free-flowing access to the interstate highway system at each site, and the relative magnitude of the obstacles and costs involved in providing such access if it does not already exist. This criterion will consider whether providing access to the interstate highway system would require crossing major navigable waterways and the construction of major bridges to provide necessary access.

## **Rail Access**

This criterion will consider the existing availability of rail access at each site, and the relative magnitude of the obstacles and costs involved in providing such access if it does not already exist. Again, a major consideration will be the requirement to cross major navigable waterways to provide access.

## **Social Impacts**

This criterion will consider a wide range of potential social impacts associated with each site. Included will be impacts such as:

- Potential impacts on existing roadways, bridges, schools, libraries, parks, and other public facilities; and
- Potential impacts on existing communities and community structure associated with terminal development at each site.

## **Environmental Impacts**

This criterion will address a variety of issues related to potential impacts on the physical and biotic environment associated with terminal development at each site. Key considerations under this criterion included:

- Would terminal development of the site create an unacceptable pollution hazard?
- Would terminal development at the site require an unacceptable impact to protected species?
- Would terminal development at the site result in a significant change to an existing ecological unit of particular value, such as a large component of an estuary?